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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 002225

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/05/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: JORDAN: KING,S CHIEF ADVISOR SAYS SUSTAINED
ACCOUNTABILITY ON ISRAEL NEEDED IN PEACE PROCESS

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (U) This cable has been cleared by CENTCOM POLAD
Michael Gfoeller.

12. (C) SUMMARY: CENTCOM Policy Advisor Michael Gfoeller
met with Royal Court International Affairs Advisor Jaffar
Hassan on September 27. In the meeting, Hassan outlined
Jordan's views on Middle East peace, Afghanistan, and
regional security issues. Hassan said that a comprehensive
agreement to Middle East peace is preferred even if it takes
longer, so long as the U.S. is seen to maintain pressure and
accountability on Israel. Hassan believes lack of a peace
agreement is inhibiting regional cooperation on Iran. END
SUMMARY.

13. (C) Middle East Peace: Hassan said that President Obama
and Senator Mitchell are playing a tremendously positive role
in fostering a two state solution. Jordan, he said, does not
insist on preconditions for final status talks, including an
Israeli settlement freeze, as long as the U.S. maintains
pressure on Israel regarding the settlements. Comprehensive
talks that fully address the status of Jerusalem and refugees
are better than splitting off key issues into separate
tracks. He said Jordan expects to play a role in any
discussion over Palestinian rights. "The U.S. must continue
pushing in a sustained way. Israel must be seen to be held
accountable by the international community," he said.

14. (C) Israel and the Holy Sites: Hassan said the Israeli
body politic has shifted to the right. Hassan said that
actions by Israel and conservative Jews to prevent access to
the Harem, the Mughrabi Gate, and other Muslim holy sites in
Jerusalem directly undercut Jordan's authority as protector
of the sites. Such actions benefit extremists and tie
Jordan's hands in calling for restraint.

15. (C) Afghanistan: Hassan stressed the need to build up
Afghanistan's security apparatus quickly saying, "We don't
see (support) for a long-term international military presence
in Afghanistan." Hassan offered that a good approach to
breaking the Taliban's hold in much of the country would be
to open a dialogue with Taliban moderates, thereby isolating
extremists.

16. (C) Regional Security and Cooperation: Hassan briefly
touched on regional issues. He said that although the
specter of an Iranian nuclear program was a grave concern for
Jordan, military action in Iran would neither be helpful nor
supported in the region. On Yemen, he encouraged support for
the current government saying that a failed state in Yemen
would be unacceptable. If the government were to fall, he
said, no country in the region would support intervention
there, leaving a situation "worse than Somalia." Jordan has

never had stronger relationships with Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria as a group, he said, as well as with Iraq. Many regional governments are on the same page with respect to Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other regional issues. These governments form what he called "an Arab depth." However, the Israel-Palestinian conflict, he said, remains the "binding restraint" preventing regional cooperation on many of these issues. (COMMENT: The notion that the lack of an agreement in the Israel-Palestinian conflict is the primary impediment preventing broader Arab cooperation, particularly on Iran, has often been repeated by senior Jordanian senior officials. End Comment.)

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Beecroft